

1. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The prior art does not teach nor disclose the two methods of producing a gas barrier laminate as outlined in independent claims 1 and 3. The closest prior art appears to be 6605344, but this reference lacks the ethylene-maleic acid copolymer of claims 1 and 3, as well as the heat treatment in the presence of water of claim 1. In addition, it does not disclose the process of claim 3 in which a gas barrier laminate is heat treated with water and a bivalent or higher metal compound.

2. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to /Erma Cameron/ whose telephone number is 571-272-1416. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30-6:00, alternate Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Timothy Meeks can be reached on 571-272-1423. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Erma Cameron/  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 1792

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